

Message Text

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73

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 L-03 NSC-10

PA-04 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 HEW-08

DRC-01 /152 W

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R 022200Z DEC 73

FM AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1913

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL SYDNEY

AMCONSUL PERTH

AMCONSUL BRISBANE

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FOR STATE, LABOR AND COMMERCE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, AS

SUBJECT: CAMERON ON INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES

1. LABOUR MINISTER CLYDE CAMERON WAS WELL IF CAUTIOUSLY RECEIVED IN TYPICALLY WELL DELIVERED SPEECH NOVEMBER 30 BEFORE MELBOURNE BRANCH OF AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE. SPEECH WILL BE PUBLISHED EITHER AS ARTICLE OR AS CHAPTER IN BOOK. CAMERON SPOKE IN USUAL STRAIGHTFORWARD, AGGRESSIVE WAY, BUT OBVIOUSLY DESIRED STEP ON NO POLITICAL TOES.

2. CAMERON MADE THREE PRINCIPAL POINTS:

(A) HE NOTED THAT VIEWS ALLEGING HE FAVORS STRIKES WERE ERRONEOUS. CAMERON BELIEVES STRIKES ARE HARMFUL AND AGAINST THE INTERESTS OF ONE OR BOTH OF THE PARTIES CONCERNED, BUT THAT THE FREEDOM TO STRIKE IS ESSENTIAL IF FOR NO OTHER REASON THAN REPRESSION OF STRIKES IS ACCOMPANIED BY SUPPRESSION OF

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FREEDOM. CAMERON SUPPORTED THIS LAST COMMENT BY A QUOTE FROM

PRESIDENT EISENHOWER.

(B) HE DEFENDED THE GOA AGAINST OPPOSITION CHARGES THAT THERE ARE MORE STRIKES UNDER A LABOR GOVERNMENT, POINTING OUT THAT NUMBER OF STRIKES AND TOTAL NUMBER OF MAN DAYS LOST IN FIRST EIGHT MONTHS OF 1973 WERE LESS THAN FOR COMPARABLE PERIOD OF 1971, AND THAT LABOR GOVERNMENT POLICIES GAVE NO CAUSE FOR POLITICALLY-MOTIVATED STRIKES. MORE IMPORTANT LOSS TO ECONOMY COMES THROUGH ABSENTEEISM AND LOWERED PRODUCTIVITY. INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS CAUSED MUCH LARGER LOSSES OF LABOR TIME THAN STRIKES.

(C) CAMERON DEVIATED FROM PREPARED TEXT TO PROMISE NEW ACTION TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN MANAGEMENT, LABOR AND GOVERNMENT. COULD NOT ELABORATE BECAUSE DETAILS MUST BE PRESENTED FIRST TO CABINET, BUT GOA WOULD ALSO PROPOSE LEGISLATION GRANTING "AMNESTY" FROM THE STRIKE PENALTY PROVISION OF THE PRESENT LAW, WITH AMNESTY TO EXPIRE AT END OF 12 MONTHS UNLESS SPECIFICALLY RENEWED BY ACT OF PARLIAMENT. HE ALSO SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD TAKE ACTION TO MOVE TOWARD THE CANADIAN SYSTEM OF MEDIATION AND VOLUNTARY ARBITRATION, BRINGING A ROAR OF APPROVAL FROM HIS AUDIENCE WHEN HIS TONGUE SLIPPED INITIALLY AND SAID HIS "GOVERNMENT WOULD ADOPT THE CANADIAN SYSTEM OF MEDIATION". HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT'S NEW PROPOSALS WOULD ATTEMPT TO GET AWAY FROM "ABSURD" STRIKES IN UNION DEMARCATION DISPUTES, THROUGH A SYSTEM OF UNION PREFERENCES IN EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS.

3. CAMERON STILL SPEAKS AND ACTS FROM DEEP-SEATED BELIEFS, AND IS ATTEMPTING TO ACT CONSTRUCTIVELY ON LABOR POLICY AND

ACTION IN AUSTRALIA. DURING SPEECH, MADE NUMEROUS ASIDES SHOWING FRIENDSHIP AND RESPECT FOR AMCHAM'S OTHER GUEST, GEORGE POLITES, SECRETARY OF COUNCIL OF EMPLOYERS' FEDERATIONS.
FLUKER

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